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Programme implementation and progress of work in the field of population in 2000: Population Division, Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report reviews the progress achieved by the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat in implementing its programme of work in the field of population in 2000. It covers the activities of the Division dealing with the analysis of demographic variables at the world level; world population estimates and projections; population policy and socio-economic development; monitoring, coordination and dissemination of population information; and technical cooperation in population. Other continuing activities of the Population Division are also described.

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I. Introduction

1. Population activities in the United Nations Secretariat are centred in the Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. As described in the Secretary-General's bulletin on the organization of the Department (ST/SGB/1997/9), the core functions of the Division are as follows:

(a) Providing accurate and timely data, information and analyses of population trends and policies; identifying new and emerging issues, and initiating studies thereof, in support of the Commission on Population and Development, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly, other intergovernmental bodies and the international community;

(b) Serving as substantive secretariat to the Commission on Population and Development, including the monitoring and review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development;

(c) Promoting coordination among United Nations entities in the field of population;

(d) Preparing the official United Nations population estimates and projections, which serve as the standard figures on population for use throughout the United Nations system;

(e) Taking the lead in the development and maintenance of population information systems and networks;

(f) Providing advisory services to assist Governments in improving their institutional and technical capabilities for the analysis of population data and related information, the formulation of national policies and the implementation and evaluation of programmes;

(g) Preparing reports of the Secretary-General to the Commission on Population and Development, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly;

(h) Preparing analytical reports, in-depth studies, background papers, briefing notes and talking points on population-related issues before the international community for the Secretary-General and his senior officials;

(i) Maintaining contacts with non-governmental organizations and academic institutions throughout the world; organizing working groups, meetings of experts, and symposia on population issues; and participating in seminars and professional meetings relating to the mandate of the Division.

2. The present report deals with the research and technical cooperation work and information activities carried out by the Population Division during 2000. The work programme for the biennium 2000-2001 was formulated and implemented within the basic framework set forth in the medium-term plan for the period 2000-2001, taking into account the recommendations of the International Conference on Population (1994), the twenty-first special session of the General Assembly on key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and other relevant international conferences.

3. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs continued to collaborate closely with agencies, funds, programmes and other bodies of the United Nations system in the implementation of the work programme and in connection with the follow-up activities to the International Conference on Population and Development. United Nations missions, national government offices, United Nations offices, researchers and the public regularly consult the Population Division regarding data and information on population and development issues.

II. Analysis of demographic variables at the world level

A. Fertility and family planning

4. The Population Division has issued a wall chart, *World Marriage Patterns 2000* (Sales No. E.00.XIII.3) which shows the most recent data available from censuses and surveys on patterns of marriage. Indicators of marriage patterns such as the proportion of men and women aged 15-19, 20-24 and 45-49 who have ever married and the average age at first marriage for men and women are shown. The data reveal an average mean age at first marriage of 27.9 years for men and 25.2 years for women in countries in the more

developed regions, compared to 24.9 years for men and 21.4 years for women in countries of the less developed regions. Large differences in the mean ages are evident. In Africa and Asia, the median male/female differences are 5 and 3.3 years, respectively, compared to only 2.7 years in the more developed regions.

5. The data for the chart are drawn from the database on marriage, which contains data for about 200 countries or areas on marital status by five-year age groups and sex. The database, prepared by the Population Division, was compiled from censuses and surveys dating from the 1960s up to the most recent data available.

6. Two other databases have been completed: the database on contraceptive use contains a compilation of estimates of contraceptive prevalence, by country and by type of method used, and the database on fertility contains total fertility rates and age-specific fertility rates, by country.

7. Two areas of ongoing study are the impact of AIDS on fertility and the effect of changing marital patterns on childbearing. In response to the AIDS epidemic and extensive AIDS-related information and educational activities carried out in many countries, sexual and childbearing behaviours have changed. The Population Division is undertaking a review and analysis of the ways in which AIDS affects sexual activity, use of condoms and fertility. With regard to marital patterns, some of the emerging issues in the area of fertility are a decreasing propensity to marry, a growing number of non-marital unions, increasing levels of dissolved unions and an increase in childbearing outside of marriage. These phenomena are being documented and analysed for their implications for fertility and the family.

B. Mortality

8. Work continued on a revision of the draft of the manual on the estimation of adult mortality. The manual presents census survival methods, methods utilizing intercensal deaths, estimations of adult deaths derived from the survivorship of parents, and estimations derived from the survivorship of siblings. It is expected that the manual will be published in 2001.

9. Work has started on the updating of the database on infant and child mortality. It is expected that the updated database will be ready in 2001.

C. International migration

10. On 21 March 2000 the Population Division issued a working paper "Replacement migration: is it a solution to declining and ageing populations?" (ESA/P/WP/160) which examines in detail the cases of eight low-fertility countries (France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and United States of America) and two regions (Europe and the European Union). In each case, alternative scenarios for the period 1995-2000 are considered, highlighting the impact that various levels of immigration might have on population size and population ageing. Major findings are outlined below.

11. In the next 50 years, the populations of most of the developed countries are projected to become smaller and older as a result of low fertility and increased longevity. Population decline appears certain in the absence of replacement migration. For the European Union, a continuation of the immigration levels observed in the 1990s would roughly suffice to prevent the total population from declining, while for Europe as a whole immigration would need to double. The numbers of immigrants needed to prevent declines in the working-age population are larger than those needed to prevent declines in total population. The levels of migration needed to prevent population ageing are many times larger than the migration streams needed to prevent population decline. If such flows were to occur, post-1995 immigrants and their descendants would represent a strikingly large share of the total population in 2050 — between 30 and 39 per cent in the case of Japan, Germany and Italy. In the absence of immigration, the potential support ratios could be maintained at current levels by increasing the upper limit of the working-age population to roughly 75 years of age.

12. Work continued on the creation of a database on east-to-west migration in Europe. It is expected to become available in 2001. It will include immigration and emigration data covering the years since 1980, by country of origin and by country of destination, for the countries of Eastern Europe, the former USSR, the former Yugoslavia, and Albania.

D. Population ageing and population decline

13. The Population Division organized an expert group meeting on policy responses to population ageing and population decline (16-18 October 2000, New York). The meeting was a follow-up to the paper "Replacement migration: is it a solution to declining and ageing populations?", issued in March 2000. It focused on the eight countries considered in the paper (see para. 10). It brought together national experts from those countries and regions as well as representatives from regional and international organizations. The experts reviewed the demographic prospects of each country and region for the next half century, identified the consequences of population decline and population ageing, and examined various policy options that Governments might adopt to cope with the unprecedented demographic challenges. Policy options are of two types: those addressing the determinants of the expected population change (by affecting migration, raising fertility etc.), and those addressing the consequences (by increasing the age of retirement and labour force participation, altering pension systems etc.). In addition, the experts identified priorities for future research in order to enhance informed policy and programme planning.

E. Internal migration

14. Work continued on the creation of a database on internal migration, starting with Latin America and the Caribbean, and Northern America. The database, which will become available in 2001 will include, for 51 countries and areas, information on migration over the past 5 years and lifetime migration, as available in each census.

15. A report on the components of urban growth in developing countries was completed and will be published in 2001. It presents, for 55 countries in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, estimates of the components of urban growth (natural growth and migration-reclassification). It also compares the findings by country in order to clarify the processes related to changing patterns. The main conclusion is that the major component of urban growth in most developing countries is not migration but natural increase.

III. World population estimates and projections

A. World population estimates and projections: the 1998 and 2000 revisions

The *1998 Revision*

16. The third report which completes the series of publications related to the *1998 Revision* was issued as a sales publication under the title *World Population Prospects: The 1998 Revision: volume III* and *Final Report* (Sales No. E.99.XIII.10). As reported in 1999, Volume III contains, in addition to a full analysis of the dynamics of fertility, mortality and international migration, a detailed description of the projection methodology used, the assumptions underlying each of the four projection variants produced, and the data available for each country.

17. The report entitled *Long-Range World Population Projections: Based on the 1998 Revision* was also issued as a sales publication (Sales No. E.00.XIII.8). It presents the results of long-range projections to 2150 for the major areas of the world. The projections are consistent with the 2050 population of each major area as projected under the *1998 Revision*. The long-range projections of fertility were made according to seven different scenarios. According to the medium scenario, total fertility remains or rises to replacement level in all major areas during 2050-2150. This scenario yields a population of 9.7 billion by 2150.

The *2000 Revision*

18. The results of the *2000 Revision* of population estimates and projections to 2050 were officially announced in February 2001 and volume I of *World Population Prospects: The 2000 Revision* has been issued as a working paper (ESA/P/WP.165). A set of diskettes presenting the results of the *2000 Revision* in digital form has also been issued. The *2000 Revision* incorporates explicitly the impact of HIV/AIDS for over 40 countries and uses a revised methodology to project the impact of the epidemic. Five different projection variants are included. In the medium variant, fertility is assumed to reach replacement level by 2050 for the majority of countries estimated to have above-replacement fertility in 1995-2000, whereas for those countries that are already near or below replacement

evel, fertility is assumed to remain below the eplacement level. In addition, for countries that are estimated to have very high fertility in 1995-2000, fertility is assumed to decline at a pace of about 1 child per decade, so that some of the countries do not reach replacement level by 2050. In the high variant, fertility is assumed to remain largely 0.4-0.5 children above the fertility levels assumed in the medium variant, and in the low variant, fertility is assumed to remain 0.4-0.5 children below the fertility assumed in the medium variant. Two illustrative variants are also prepared. A constant fertility variant, where fertility is kept constant at the level estimated for 1995-2000 is calculated for comparison purposes. Also, a zero-migration variant with the same fertility and mortality assumptions as the medium variant but with international migration set to zero as of 2000 is also included for comparison purposes.

B. Urban, rural and city population estimates and projections

19. The results of the *1999 Revision of World Urbanization Prospects* were issued as a working paper (ESA/P/WP.161). A full report, including an in-depth analysis of the *Revision* results, was completed and is awaiting publication. According to the *1999 Revision*, the proportion of people living in urban areas worldwide is expected to rise from 47 per cent in mid 2000 to 50 per cent in 2007 and to reach 60 per cent by 2030. The world urban population has been growing at a rate of 2.1 per cent per year, more than three times that of the rural population (0.7 per cent per year) during 1995-2000. As a result, urban areas are today absorbing 57 million persons each year, compared with the 21 million absorbed annually by rural areas. By 2025-2030 urban areas will be growing at a projected rate of 1.5 per cent per year, gaining 71 million persons annually.

20. Tokyo continues to be the largest urban agglomeration in the world, with 26.4 million residents in 2000, 8.3 million more than the world's second largest urban agglomeration, Mexico City (18.1 million). Tokyo's population has been increasing less rapidly than projected in the *1996 Revision*. In 2000 the third largest urban agglomeration was Bombay with just under 18.1 million inhabitants, closely followed by São Paulo (17.8 million) and New York (16.6 million). There were 19 urban agglomerations with more than 10 million inhabitants in 2000, a number that is expected to rise to 23 by 2015, with Tokyo, Bombay and Lagos heading the list of major urban agglomerations for that year.

IV. Population policy and socio-economic development

A. Population policies

21. In the area of emerging issues in population policy, the ongoing project on abortion policies continued. During 2000, the first volume (vol. I, *Afghanistan to France*) of the three-volume series, *Abortion Policies: A Global Review* (ST/ESA/SER.A/187), was completed and submitted for publication. The second and third volumes (vol. II, *Gabon to Norway* (ST/ESA/SER.A/191); and vol. III, *Oman to Zimbabwe* (ST/ESA/SER.A/196)) were also completed and are in the editing process. The publication aims at providing objective information about the nature of abortion law and policy in all countries at the end of the twentieth century. For each country, there is a fact sheet containing information on the grounds on which abortions are performed, additional requirements, and key indicators on reproductive health. Included in the background text is information on the social and political setting of changes in abortion laws and policies, the ways in which those laws and policies have been formulated, and how they have evolved over time.

22. Given the importance of the upcoming special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, work was undertaken on a wall chart on policies in regard to HIV/AIDS, which will be made available at the special session. In addition, work is being undertaken on a monograph on policies in regard to HIV/AIDS, which will use data from the Demographic and Health Surveys (DHS) on attitudes and practices in regard to HIV/AIDS prevention to provide a context for policy interventions.

23. Work continued on the database on population policies, which contains information on national population policies from all available sources, including the United Nations Population Inquiries. Preliminary work began on the eighth edition of the Population Policy Database, 2001, which will be available in mid 2001.

B. Population and development

24. The report *Charting the Progress of Populations* (ST/ESA/SER.R/151) was published in January 2000. It grew out of the participation of the Population Division in activities aimed at ensuring a coordinated and system-wide implementation of the goals and commitments adopted by recent global conferences. It features the 12 key statistical indicators which were chosen on the basis of their relevance to the goals adopted at the recent conferences. It provides updated data as well as an analytic summary of the information, showing how near or how far countries are from achieving the goals set out at the conferences with respect to the selected indicators in the areas of population and primary health care, including reproductive health; nutrition; basic education; safe water and sanitation; and shelter. The report also provides background information about data sources, coverage and quality. The Population Division received active assistance from other United Nations offices and specialized agencies in preparing the report. At the request of the Division for Social Development/ Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Charting the Progress of Populations* was a background document for the Commission on Social Development during preparations for the special session of the General Assembly for the five-year review and appraisal of progress in implementing the World Summit on Social Development.

25. The Technical Meeting on Population Ageing and Living Arrangements of Older Persons was held at United Nations Headquarters from 8 to 10 February 2000. The Meeting brought together experts from the different world regions to consider the most pressing issues concerning population ageing and the living arrangements of older persons, historical and cultural contexts, the social process through which living arrangements of older persons influences the demand for formal and informal support systems, and how Governments respond to these perceived needs. The Meeting also assessed gaps in the knowledge base and priorities for future research. The proceedings of the Meeting have been issued as a working paper and will be formally published as a special issue of the *United Nations Population Bulletin* (ST/ESA/SER.N/42-43). Additional work is under way to improve information about current patterns and trends in living arrangements of older persons, particularly in developing countries.

26. Also in the area of ageing, work is in progress on a publication tentatively entitled *Population Ageing in Numbers*, to be issued as a background document in advance of the Second World Assembly on Ageing in 2002. The report will provide summary tables and an analytic discussion as well as detailed tables for individual countries and areas, dealing with the growth of the older population, by sex, improvements in mortality levels at older ages, and past and projected trends in the relative numbers of older and younger persons. Gender-specific information about trends in labour-force participation, literacy and pension coverage will also be included, drawing on the work of other organizations of the United Nations system.

27. A new wall chart, *Population, Environment and Development, 2001*, is linked to the topical theme of the Commission on Population and Development for 2001. The chart presents statistical data relating to countries' population size and growth, economic development and selected areas of environmental concern, including the supply of fresh water, deforestation, food and agriculture, and greenhouse gas emissions.

28. The next version of the data bank on population, resources, environment and development (PRED Bank) is scheduled for release during 2001. The new version has global coverage; the selection of variables has been revised; and a new user interface has been developed for data retrieval and export. The PRED Bank includes selected indicators from the *2000 Revision* of population estimates and projections and other Population Division data, as well as economic, social and environmental indicators from other United Nations offices and other international organizations.

V. Monitoring, coordination and dissemination of population information

A. Monitoring of population trends and policies

29. During 2000, the Population Division prepared the latest edition of its annual report, *World Population Monitoring*. The theme was population, environment

and development, as decided by the Commission on Population and Development, in its decisions 1999/1 and 2000/1.[1] The report will be presented to the thirty-fourth session of the Commission, along with the companion *Concise Report* (E/CN.9/2001/2). After the Commission has commented on the two reports, the Population Division will publish them, as amended.

30. The general trends of rapid population growth, sustained but uneven economic improvement and environmental change are widely acknowledged. However, the interrelationship between population size and growth, environmental change and development are not well understood. *World Population Monitoring* investigates what is known about these interrelationships. It analyses recent information and policy perspectives on the three factors. The topics investigated include: the evolution of population and the environment at major United Nations Conferences; temporal trends in population, environment and development; government views and policies concerning population, environment and development; population size and growth, environment, and development; migration, population change, and the rural environment; health, mortality, fertility and the environment; and population, environment, and development in urban settings. The report also contains two annexes, one on the availability and quality of data, and the other on theories and frameworks for modelling the impact of population growth on the physical environment.

B. Population web sites

1. Population Division web site
(http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm)

31. During 2000, the Population Division developed its web site within the site of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs. The interface for the population area is similar to that of the web sites of other areas of responsibility of the Department, making it easier for users to keep up to date on the range of activities in economic and social affairs. The home page of the site provides an overview of activities and organizations in the United Nations system which are active in the population and development area. It provides a link to the Population Division web site (http://www.un.org/esa/population/unpop.htm) and the sites of other United Nations entities active in the population field.

32. The Population Division web site provides information about new Population Division research publications. All or selected parts of a publication will appear. Examples of items on the new web site are: the announcement and background papers prepared by the Population Division and by the participating experts for the Expert Group Meeting on Policy Responses to Population Ageing and Population Decline, and *World Marriages Pattern 2000* (wall chart).

2. Population information network
(www.popin.org)

33. During 2000, the Population Division's Population Information Network (POPIN) continued to focus on increasing access to substantive population information at the interregional, regional and national level. Global and regional commission POPIN web sites were updated and revised, and the POPIN Internet *Worldwide Directory of Population Institutions* was expanded. During 2000, Global POPIN and the Association for Population/Family Planning Libraries and Information Centers (APLIC) launched the publication of a new series of guides to electronic resources — namely, *Getting Started: Selected Electronic Resources on HIV/AIDS*, the *Guide to Citation of Electronic Information, Copyright and Intellectual Property* and *Selected Electronic Training Resources on Population and Reproductive Health*.

34. POPIN was also active on the regional level. In Africa the Economic Commission for Africa Food Security and Sustainable Development Division, which coordinates POPIN-Africa, updated its web site to include more links to African electronic population information resources, more full-text African publications on population issues, an electronic version of the second issue of *Africa's Population and Development Bulletin*, and a new version of the Population, Environment, Agriculture and Development (PEDA) computer software model. In Asia and the Pacific, global POPIN continued to provide technical support and assistance for the maintenance and updating of the web sites of the UNFPA country support teams for the South Pacific and Central and South Asia. ESCAP's Asia/Pacific POPIN created electronic databases of population and family planning information and/or reproductive health indicators for a number of Asian countries. In the Arab States and Western Asia, the League of Arab States Population Research Unit (PRU) web site was updated

to include survey information from the Pan Arab Project for Child Development (PAPCHILD) Morocco Survey and the PAPCHILD Lebanese Survey. In Europe, the ECE Population Activities Unit (PAU), which coordinates POPIN-Europe, expanded its web site to offer comprehensive access to Fertility and Family Survey data and reports, and proceedings of other ECE meetings. In Latin America and the Caribbean the ECLAC Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) redesigned, updated and expanded its web site and assisted with the creation of two new POPIN Latin America and the Caribbean (IPALCA) sites at the Caja Costarricense de Seguro Social (CCSS) in Costa Rica and the Maestria en Demografia, Universidad Nacional de Cordoba, Argentina.

VI. Technical cooperation

35. The Population Division has continued to implement a programme of technical assistance to build capacity among population research centres in developing countries. As part of this programme, the Population Division co-organized and participated in a training workshop for staff of institutions belonging to the Demoneta network of francophone population research centres in Western Africa, held in Niamey in April 2000, and assisted in the maintenance and continued development of the network's web site. In collaboration with the Population and Rural and Urban Development Division of ESCAP, the Population Division organized a training workshop, "Advanced use of the Internet for population research", held in Bangkok in December 2000, for staff from eight population training and research centres in developing countries of the ESCAP region. The workshop launched a collaborative network named Demonetasia to promote further cooperation among the participating centres and with their international partners. A web site and an electronic discussion group were created for the network.

36. The Population Division initiated a programme of outreach to doctoral population students from developing countries. Through the programme, selected students are provided with the opportunity to participate in technical meetings organized by the Population Division and to receive additional training on the activities of the United Nations in the area of population. Three students (from Bolivia, India and Nepal) benefited from the programme in 2000, in connection with the Expert Group Meeting on Policy Responses to Population Ageing and Population Decline (see para. 13).

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 5* (E/1999/25), chap. I, sect. C; and *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, Supplement No. 5* (E/2000/25), chap. I, sect. B.

Annex

Publications, expert group meetings and other materials prepared or organized by the Population Division in 2000

Expert group meetings

Technical Meeting on Population Ageing and Living Arrangements of Older Persons 8-10 February 2000, New York

Policy Responses to Population Ageing and Population Decline 16-18 October 2000, New York

Research studies

Charting the Progress of Populations. ESA/P/WP.149.

Global Population Policy Database, 1999. ST/ESA/SER.R/153.

Long-range World Population Projections Based on the 1998 Revision. Sales No. E.00.XIII.8.

Population and Development: The Demographic Transition. ESA/P/WP.162.

Population Policy Diskette documentation, 1999. ST/ESA/SER.R/154.

Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Populations? ESA/P/WP.160.

Replacement Migration: Is it a Solution to Declining and Ageing Population? Executive Summary. ESA/P/WP.160/ES.

United Nations Technical Meeting on Population Ageing and Living Arrangements of Older Persons. ESA/P/WP.157/Rev.1.

World Population Monitoring 2000: Population, Gender and Development. ESA/P/WP.159.

World Population Monitoring 2001: Population, Environment and Development. ESA/P/WP.164.

World Populations Prospects: The 1998 Revision. Volume III: Analytical Report. Sales No. E.99.XIII.10.

World Urbanization Prospects: The 1999 Revision. ESA/P/WP.161.

Wall charts

Urban Agglomerations 1999. ST/ESA/SER.A/184. Sales No. E.00.XIII.3.

Urban and Rural Areas 1999. ST/ESA/SER.A/185. Sales No. E.00.XIII.2.

World Marriage Patterns. ST/ESA/SER.A/188. Sales No. E.00.XIII.7.

Periodicals

Population Newsletter, No. 68.

Population Newsletter, No. 69.

The *Newsletter* is issued biannually to provide, to a wide readership, information on the programme activities of the Population Division; on action taken by legislative bodies with competence in the population field; and on meetings on population and related issues organized by the Population Division and other United Nations organizations, and on recent and forthcoming publications of the Population Division.